

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 10, 12, 13, and 17 - 34 are pending in the present application. Claims 11 and 14 - 16 were previously canceled.

In section 2 of the Office Action, claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In response, Applicants amended claim 21. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the section 112 rejection are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1 – 10, 12, 13 and 17 – 34 are rejected on the basis of the disclosures of one or more of the following patents:

- (1) US 4,730,313 to Stephenson et al. (hereinafter “the Stephenson et al. patent”);
- (2) US 5,184,345 to Sahni (hereinafter “the Sahni patent”);
- (3) US 5,721,729 to Klingman et al. (hereinafter “the Klingman et al. patent”);
- (4) US 5,784,558 to Emerson et al. (hereinafter “the Emerson et al. patent”); and
- (5) US 5,533,007 to Orita et al. (hereinafter “the Orita et al patent”).

Of the rejected claims, seven are independent, namely claims 1, 4 - 7, 33 and 34. Applicants amended the independent claims to clarify a feature that is neither expressly described nor suggested by any of the cited references.

Referring to claim 1, there is provided a method of monitoring an ISDN link. The method includes monitoring an ISDN link using a passive probe connected to the ISDN link via a tap. An example of a monitoring system architecture employing the method is illustrated in FIG. 3, and described at page 3, lines 15 et seq. Use of a probe to monitor a link via a tap is described, for example, in a passage at page 10, line 38 – page 11, line 6.

Applicants respectfully submit that none of the cited references either describe or suggest monitoring signaling messages via a tap, as recited in claim 1. Thus, the cited references, whether considered individually or in combination with one another, neither anticipate claim 1 nor render claim 1 unpatentable.

Independent claims 4 – 7, 33 and 34 each include a recital similar to that of claim 1, as described above. Therefore, for reasons similar to that of claim 1, independent claims 4 – 7, 33 and 34 are also novel and patentable over the cited references.

Claims 2, 3, 8 – 10, 12, 13 and 17 – 32 depend from one of independent claims 1, 4, 5, 6 or 7. Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 8 – 10, 12, 13 and 17 – 32 are also novel and patentable over the cited references.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1 – 10, 12, 13 and 17 – 34.

Applicants amended claim 21 to address a rejection under section 112, and amended claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 33 and 34 to recite a feature that is neither described nor suggested by any of the cited references. None of these amendments is intended to limit the scope of any term of any of the claims, and as such, Applicants respectfully submit that the Doctrine of Equivalents should be available for all of the terms of all of the claims.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims presented in this application patentably distinguish over the prior art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and that this application be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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